

Submitted June 9, 2010

Approved As of

Date June 9, 2010

**MINUTES OF THE ROCKVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**MEETING NO. Meeting No. 07-10**  
**Wednesday, March 24, 2010**

The City of Rockville Planning Commission convened in regular session in the Mayor and Council Chambers at 7:30 p.m., Wednesday, March 24, 2010.

**PRESENT**  
**David Hill**  
**Steve Johnson**  
**Sarah Medearis**  
**Kate Ostell**  
**Tracy Pakulniewicz**  
**John Tyner II**

**Absent:** None.

**Present:** Bridget Newton, Council Liaison  
Susan Swift, Director of CPDS  
Jim Wasilak, Chief of Planning  
Marcy Waxman, Assistant City Attorney  
Bobby Ray, Principal Planner  
Cas Chasten, Planner III  
Nicole Walters, Planner I  
Betsy Thompson, Superintendent of Recreation  
Burt Hall, Director, Recreation and Parks  
Rebecca Torma-Kim, Transportation Planner  
Tyler Tansing, Commission Secretary

**EXECUTIVE SESSION (Black-Eyed Susan)**

At 6:30 p.m., the three members of Planning Commission met in Executive Session, pursuant to Section 10-508(a)(7) of the State Government Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, to consult with counsel to obtain legal advice regarding ex parte communication.

The Planning Commission, Board of Appeals and Historic District Commission met in Executive

Session, pursuant to Section 10-508(a)(7) of the State Government Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, to consult with counsel to obtain legal advice regarding legal representation. None of the commissions had a quorum.

## REVIEW AND ACTION

### **Site Plan STP2010-00028, Department of Recreation and Parks - for construction of a 6,070 square foot addition to the Rockville Senior Center at 1150 Carnation Drive in the Park Zone.**

Ms. Walters presented the staff report.

Questions from the Commission:

Request for parking deferral; Impervious surface calculation, how staff reacts to comments received from citizens regarding actual traffic in that area. Commissioner Hill described the emails from citizens that were included in the Commission's packets for this evening.

Commissioner Hill asked staff for clarifications on some of the wording in the staff report. Ms. Torma explained.

Ms. Thompson introduced representatives of the applicant and neighborhood to the Commission, addressed items of concern from the Commission's last meeting with regard to traffic impact from the Senior Center, as well as bus service through the neighborhood, and information concerning the fitness expansion and impacts on the property.

Questions from the Commission with regard to traffic in neighborhood; seniors having difficulty driving to the Senior Center; possibly relocating the parking to the rear of the property; and, the use of the exercise room as to how many people actually use the fitness equipment. Ms. Thompson explained.

Lexie McKenzie, Senior Citizen Program Manager, explained how many seniors actually use the fitness room.

In response to Commissioner Ostell, Chris Klopfer, fitness instructor replied that they do not have the data regarding the numbers of users of the fitness center. She explained the numbers of users using the equipment each day.

Mr. Hall and Ms. McKenzie explained the use of the Senior Center.

Commissioner Pakulniewicz questioned increased traffic if users of the center double in number in the future. Ms. Thompson explained.

Mr. Hall stated that if the numbers increase, the City would be moving activities to other centers in the City. They would continue to monitor traffic and if traffic becomes excessive, steps would need

to be made to change programming and possibly spreading out the programs and having more evening and weekend hours. He noted that, at some point, they would have to build a Gude Drive entrance and redirect as much of the bus traffic to that entrance. He explained that there are real changes in solving the traffic problems, and parking and cut-through issues.

There was further discussion regarding trips generated by the use; ride-on bus routes; the construction entrance; the Transco pipeline near Gude Drive; and deferral of parking on the site. Ms. Thompson explained and further discussed the many challenges ahead concerning the facility.

The following citizens spoke:

1. Linda Rafats, 1906 South Fallsmead Way, testified that she favors the expansion. Ms. Rafats continued to discuss the wonderful programs at the Senior Center and the people it serves. She said she opposes the construction access off Gude Drive and discussed traffic and parking issues.
2. Ruthann Stoltzfus testified that she favors the expansion. She lived in Rockville for 24 years, but she just recently moved to Germantown and still drives to the Senior Center because of the facility and the people. Ms. Stoltzfus further talked about the very crowded fitness room.
3. Doug Bly testified that he is a member of the Rockville Senior Commission as well as other committees in the City. Mr. Bly stated that he favors the expansion. Mr. Bly further discussed senior living, healthy exercise, and social interaction. He noted that the space in the fitness facility is very limited for people to use comfortably. Mr. Bly further discussed how the issue of space for safety is important for the seniors using the facility. Mr. Bly asked the Commission to move this application along for it is an issue that needs to be resolved.
4. Dawn Summer Titmas, 828 Aster Boulevard, testified that she is for the expansion. Ms. Titmas stated that she was on the Steering Committee and its charge was whether the expansion of the facility was necessary and then get the feasibility study done. It was an unanimous "Yes" because the space is so tight for the seniors and it makes it very difficult for them to continue their entire day at the facility.
5. Joan Galasso, 636 Crocus Drive, testified that she is for the expansion. She stated that she believes that traffic is a separate issue, which does not have to be decided now, but, because of the impending closure of the opportunity for the grant money from the State, she feels that the City must move ahead with this expansion. Ms. Galasso stated that she does understand and sympathizes with the parents living on Crocus to protect their children, but there is an issue of fairness. She further explained that the seniors have supported many of the City's parks, sport and school activities for children over many years and they are happy to do so. Ms. Galasso noted that the seniors deserve some consideration, too. She further discussed the need for the expansion.
6. Charles Ely, 634 Crocus Drive, testified that he favors the expansion and believes that senior center is a valuable asset to the community and important to the health and well-being of all of Rockville's senior citizens. Mr. Ely also believes that providing convenient transportation services and vehicular access to the center is essential. He feels that he is expressing the view of the

majority of the current residents of Woodley Gardens, who are, either original owners, or longtime residents. Mr. Ely stated that he does not concur with the efforts of the minority of the Woodley Gardens Civic Association membership, who are seeking to limit transportation services and curtail accessibility to the senior center.

7. Mary Jane Walling, 939 Paulsboro Drive, testified that she is the President and Chair of Rockville Senior Incorporated and she is representing the members of the Senior Center. Ms. Walling presented a signed petition to the Commission in support of the expansion. Ms. Walling further expounded on the history of the project as well as the grant that would be lost if this project is not approved.

8. Charles Plost, 1705 Sunrise Drive, testified that he favors the expansion and read a statement from Mr. Galasso, who could not attend this evening. Mr. Plost stated that Mr. Galasso's statement reflects his own opinion, which is in favor of the expansion.

9. Lewis DearDorff, 623 Crocus Drive, testified that he fully supports the expansion of the Senior Center and he hopes that the Commission will approve it.

10. James Tavares, 627 Crocus Drive, testified about the parking and pervious areas and the improvements that could be done.

11. Marty Gross, 805 Reserve Champion Drive, testified that he is a member of the Senior Center and he participates in the activities three or four days a week. Mr. Gross stated that he favors the expansion and using the equipment is very hazardous due to the lack of space in the current facility. The Senior Center is a very important facility for seniors. Mr. Gross also discussed opening up a Gude Drive entrance to the Senior Center.

12. Jerry Rafats, 1906 South Fallsmead Way, testified that he favors the expansion. Mr. Rafats talked about the number of senior using the fitness facility at the Senior Center and those people who are against the expansion.

13. Ciriaco Gonzalez, 4615 Glasgow Drive, testified that he is chair of the Senior Citizens' Commission. Mr. Gonzales pointed and discussed two issues of concern regarding the Senior Center such as parking and the need to expand the fitness facility.

14. Jim Dittbrenner, 5 Manorvale Court, testified that he favors the expansion. Mr. Dittbrenner explained the difficulties his wife has in finding an available exercise machine at the fitness facility and the traffic issue in the neighborhood.

15. Margaret Eccles, 703 Marshall Avenue, testified that she favors the expansion. Ms. Eccles discussed the cramped quarters and unavailability of exercise machines in the facility and the wide variety of classes, meals, and social gatherings at the Senior Center.

16. Eric Ekelton, 812 Aster Boulevard, testified that he favors the expansion.

17. Felix Ricking, 803 Crocus Drive, testified that he is against expanding the facility without addressing the traffic issue. He further expounded on the traffic situation in the community and his proposal to mitigate the traffic.

18. Jim Wilson, 817 Crocus Drive, discussed his problem with the parking. He said that his problem is the parking and some people park in front of his house as well as all over the community.

19. Janet Kennedy, 1038 Carnation Drive, testified that she uses another facility, but she is concerned about the traffic in the community. Ms. Kennedy stated that she feels that this is not the time to expand because of the economic problems in the country.

20. Jen Jones, 800 Crocus Drive, testified that she is appalled at the amount of money that would be spent for the expansion. She said that she knows the expansion is needed due to lack of space, but does the City really need a \$2.5M exercise room? The City is in debt; the Nation is in debt. She stated that the traffic is very bad and impacts the neighborhood and she lives on the upper block of Crocus Drive. She further discussed the traffic report.

21. Karen Bartlett, 814 Crocus Drive, testified that she favors the expansion and addressed her concern with the traffic issues in the community.

22. Jim Rechovsky, 1005 Aster Boulevard, President of Woodley Gardens Civic Association (WGCA), testified that WGCA endorse the expansion of the fitness facility; they support the consolidation of the deferred parking; they oppose the addition of the 31 proposed parking spaces, and, at this time, they are asking the Planning Commission to defer 86 rather than 55 parking spaces and they would support a construction entrance.

23. Albert Martinez, 1 Hawthorne Court, testified that the neighborhood needs more directional signs for people. He said that the Senior Center is in need of the fitness facility expansion. Mr. Martinez stated that he is in favor of centralizing senior activities in the City. Mr. Martinez further addressed the parking and traffic issues.

The Commission discussed the following:

1. The size of fitness center after the expansion? Ms. Thompson explained.
2. Whether the #63 bus that goes down Gude Drive could be better utilized to service the Senior Center. Ms. Torma and Mr. Hall addressed the question.
3. Whether to waive some of the parking and not pave over the grassy area by the entrance to the Senior Center.
4. How would deferring 86 parking spaces affect the project? Ms. Thompson explained.
5. Concerns about the traffic in the community. Ms. Torma discussed the traffic management

process.

6. In response to the Commission regarding the traffic in the community, Mr. Hall addressed the traffic issue.

7. Commissioner Johnson felt that with the small amount of additional square feet, traffic would be insignificant and to condition this application on any traffic measures would be inappropriate. He noted that the Ride-on bus does seem to cause a problem in the community.

Commissioner Tyner moved, seconded by Commissioner Johnson to approve Site Plan STP2010-00028, Department of Recreation and Parks with an impervious surface calculation waiver and deferring 86 parking spaces, and that the Commission not consider Gude Drive construction entrance at this point.

Commissioner Hill asked if the Commission needs to be specific about the location of the deferral. Ms. Walters replied that the Commission does need to be specific about the location because it could cause a problem regarding stormwater management.

Mr. Hall asked to amend the motion by deferring the parking spaces from 86 to 78 spaces. Mr. Hall explained.

Dave Sarver with SWSG, pointed out that the rear entrance by the greenhouse is going to be an improved rear entrance. He asked that the Commission keep in mind that part of the proposed additional parking is also creating a turn-around space in order to get to the new rear entrance. He further explained about the paving.

The Commission and staff further discussed the deferred parking issue.

After further discussion, Commissioner Tyner withdrew the motion.

The public record was reopened to hear further comments.

Jim Rechovsky, President of WGCA, further discussed the pervious parking area on the site. Dan Kane, engineer with Public Works, explained the purpose of pervious parking spaces is to provide stormwater management for the actual building addition. Commissioner Hill questioned what the advantage is with pervious pavement over pervious ground as a practical stormwater feature. Mr. Kane explained.

Commissioner Tyner moved, seconded by commissioner Johnson to approve Site Plan STP2010-00028 per staff recommendations including the waiver of the impervious surface requirements, a parking deferral of 55 parking spaces and that no Gude Drive entrance be constructed. The motion passed on a vote of 5-0. (Commissioner Medearis was absent.)

Commissioner Tyner recommended to staff that the Gude Drive access be considered as part of the CIP hearing.

**Site Plan STP2010-00020, City of Rockville - for rehabilitation and expansion of the former post office and construction of an annex building to be used as the City's police station at 2 West Montgomery Avenue in the MXNC Zone.**

Mr. Chasten presented an overview of the staff report.

Commissioner Hill asked staff to consider new language to modify Condition 1.a. in the staff report regarding the 25 parking spaces located in the parking structure at 77 South Washington Street.

The following topics were discussed:

1. Public use space. Mr. Chasten explained.
2. Landscaping, Screening, and Lighting Manual. Mr. Chasten explained.
3. How many parking spaces do the police currently use on and off site. Chief Treschuk and Mr. Hall explained.
3. How many square feet do the Police Department currently have. Mr. Hall explained.
4. How many parking spaces for visitors and handicapped? Mr. Hall explained.
5. Ingress and egress on the site. Chief Treschuk explained.
6. Confusion as to whether this project would be built in one or two phases. Mr. Hall explained.

Jeremy Kline, architect with WGM, discussed the two-phase project.

7. What is the number of parking spaces in the lower level of the garage. Mr. Chasten, Mr. Hall, and Chief Treschuk explained.
8. Would there be an impact on East Middle Lane and Route 355. Ms. Torma explained.
9. Must have a broader concept for the impact of these projects.
10. The impact of these projects on transportation in the Town Center.

Chief Treschuk presented the applicant's request.

Jeremy Kline with WGM, provided a slide presentation of the Post Office.

Commissioner Hill inquired whether there was a potential of combining the old Burbanks' site into this project in the future. Mr. Hall explained.

Commissioner Pakulniewicz moved, seconded by Commissioner Ostell to approve Site Plan STP2010-00020, City of Rockville per staff recommendations including a waiver of the parking requirements and that a modification to Condition 1.a. that would reference the parking garage on North Washington Street. The motion passed on a vote of 5-0 (Commissioner Medearis was absent.)

**Final Record Plat PLT2010-00499, City of Rockville - for the assemblage of two partial record lots into a single record lot of 23,912 square feet and street dedication at 2 West Montgomery Avenue in the MXNC Zone.**

Commissioner Tyner moved, seconded by Commissioner Ostell to approve Final Record Plat PLT2010-00499, City of Rockville per staff recommendations. The motion passed on a vote of 5-0 with Commissioner Medearis being absent.

## **COMMISSION ITEMS**

### **Chief of Planning Report**

Mr. Wasilak discussed the upcoming agenda items.

### **Old Business**

Commissioner Hill discussed a letter submitted yesterday from the Glenora Hills Citizens Association asking for a rehearing of Brightview recommendation. The Commission discussed the letter.

Commissioner Pakulniewicz commented on some issues that she would like to discuss such as inviting WMATA and Metro and public transportation people to have an open discussion with the Commission regarding their plans for the future for public transportation in Rockville as well as Fee-in-lieu, the Taylor property, and the facade of the JBG garage.

### **New Business**

Commissioner Hill discussed having a meeting regarding the APFO requirements.

### **Minutes**

The Commission and staff discussed procedures as to whether members of the Commission could vote on meeting minutes they did not attend.

Commissioner Pakulniewicz moved, seconded by Commissioner Johnson to approve the minutes of Meeting no. 3-10. The motion passed on a vote of 5-0 with Commissioner Medearis being absent.

### **FYI Correspondence**



Commissioner Hill announced that he received correspondence regarding art work in Twinbrook, which, he believes is worth sharing with staff.

**Adjourn**

After further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 11:36 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

---

Tyler Tansing, Commission Secretary